United Nations A/58/162/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 October 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Agenda items 73 (d), (t), (x) and (y)
General and complete disarmament

Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

Nuclear disarmament

Reducing nuclear danger

Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*

Report of the Secretary-General

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* This reply was received after the submission of the main report.

03-54347 (E) 081003

III. Information received from Governments

Malaysia

[30 September]

It has been 25 years since the General Assembly convened the first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978. At that session, Member States agreed that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. Malaysia believes that the danger remains as grave as ever.

The advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat and Use of Nuclear Weapons*, issued on 8 July 1996, remains a historic and resolute decision in the field of nuclear disarmament. The Court's unanimous conclusion that there exists a legal obligation not only to pursue in good faith but also to bring negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects to an early conclusion, constitutes a legal call to rid the world of nuclear weapons. It is also consistent with the solemn obligation made by States parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

There has been little progress towards nuclear disarmament over the last year. Large stocks of nuclear weapons remain in the arsenals of the nuclear weapon States. Further, there are plans by nuclear weapon States to build new nuclear weapons as well as plans for their possible use in future military conflicts. The international community has also witnessed the decision by a State party to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. There is also the possibility that other State parties may decide to withdraw from the Treaty.

Malaysia remains committed to the goal of attaining general and complete disarmament in the world, in particular, nuclear disarmament. We are convinced that the only defence against a nuclear catastrophe is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we will continue to work with the international community in the pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons. Malaysia will continue to introduce, for the eighth consecutive year, a resolution on the advisory opinion on the *Legality of the Threat and Use of Nuclear Weapons*. We are convinced that it would continue to enjoy the overwhelming support of Member States, as has been the case in the past. We call upon all Member States to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolution 57/85 in good faith in accordance with the resolve made by our leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit — "to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers".

Malaysia has continued to work actively with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to strengthen the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). We will continue to work closely with our ASEAN neighbours in our common pursuit to encourage nuclear weapon States to accede to the SEANWFZ Protocol at an early date.

The multilateral approach towards disarmament provides a genuine measure for disarmament and non-proliferation. Towards that end, Malaysia believes that all States parties to existing disarmament and related treaties and agreements must fully adhere and comply with their provisions. Every effort should also be made to strengthen these treaties and agreements.